

State of California
Department of Water Resources
State Water Resources Control Board
Department of Health Services

Public Information, Education, and Outreach
Workgroup
of the
2002 Recycled Water Task Force
on
Better Public Involvement
In the
Recycled Water Decision Process
Draft White Paper Presentation
Ane Deister

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Public Information, Education and Outreach

■ Charge

The main charge of the Public Information, Education and Outreach Workgroup is to address issues related to public perception and acceptance, public education programs, and social equity in the distribution of recycled water.

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Opportunity

- Identify ways to:
 - ◆ Get public and other affected stakeholders support
 - ◆ Learn what the public/dec. mkr. issues are
 - ◆ Communicate effectively
 - ◆ Listen effectively
 - ◆ Involve public early
 - ◆ Incorporate public issues within
 - ◆ Champion use of recycled water

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Public Acceptance to Recycled Water Use in California

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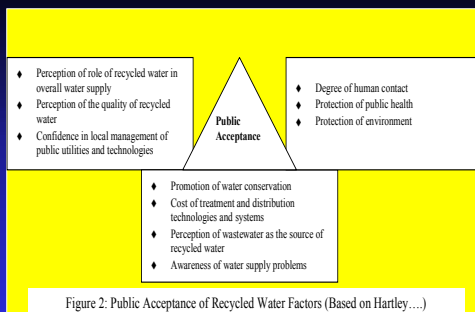


Figure 2: Public Acceptance of Recycled Water Factors (Based on Hartley....)

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PUBLIC PERCEPTION ISSUES

Over 200 water recycling projects operate in California today. This high count illustrates the public's acceptance and support for water recycling. Despite this, some major projects have failed.....Why?

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PUBLIC PERCEPTION ISSUES

There are a variety of specific issues that may arise when recycled water projects are introduced:

- water quality – pertains to the public health concern
- economics – how much will the program cost and who will pay for it, and how much will the recycled water cost the customer
- water supply – pertains to the growth issue
- environmental justice
- general opposition – belief that recycled water should be an option of last resort.

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PUBLIC PERCEPTION ISSUES

Case Studies

- [San Gabriel Valley Groundwater Recharge Project](#).
- [Dublin San Ramon Services District's Clean Water Revival Project](#).
- [City of San Diego's Water Repurification Project](#).
- [City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's East Valley Water Reclamation Project](#).

Finding

- The label "Toilet to Tap" cannot be avoided, emerging unknown contaminants remain a concern, and indirect potable reuse projects can be vulnerable to political agendas.
- Projects are more difficult to implement after they have been chosen and planned without sufficient public participation.

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

public participation is important and needs to be part of the decision making process. Within this context, recycled water can and should play an important role, but it is also within this context that advocates of recycled water must be able to clearly define and show that their product meets all interests, public health, environmental health, and economic viability, in the use proposed.

Public Notice Requirements Under CEQA
Public Notice Requirements Under NEPA

Value-Based Decision-Making Model

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Values based decision making

- ◆ The public is capable of making wise and prudent decisions
- ◆ Public involvement throughout the process
- ◆ Full range of interested and affected parties should be included
- ◆ Identify common interests and full range of options
- ◆ Approach in an integrated manner
- ◆ Go slow before you know—precautionary approach
- ◆ Transparency in evaluation process and decision making—needed resources are available.
- ◆ Project analysis (science, economics, environmental and social impacts) should be robust
- ◆ The project is responsive to the public process

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Case Studies

- ◆ [Orange County Water District and Orange County Sanitation District Groundwater Replenishment System](#)
- ◆ [Personal Studies](#)

Finding

The best way to approach the public is with an open mind. By following the value-based decision-making model, the results may take more time, but in the end more people will be satisfied and the resulting project is more likely to be successfully implemented.

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PLANNING RECYCLED WATER

Present the water recycling option based on side-by-side comparison of the various water supplies along with the cost and benefits of the various sources.

Reliability of Recycled water is an important selling factor.

Case studies:

[Serrano Development](#)
[Monterey County Water Recycling Projects](#)

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Case Studies

- ♦ Orange County Water District and Orange County Sanitation District Groundwater Replenishment System
- ♦ Personal Studies

Finding

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Public Policy and Politics

■ Policy Hurdles

- ♦ State support for water recycling ?
 - ♦ Local health offices and other regulatory agencies roles?
 - ♦ City and county planning agencies

■ Political Hurdles

- ♦ "Top-Down" state support for recycling
- ♦ Homegrown local support
- ♦ Coordinate, State and local planning processes
- ♦ Elected officials and their role
- ♦ Politics of water
- ♦ Recycled water... option in the mix of available options
- ♦ Media and politicians

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Action at the State Level

- * A state media campaign
- * School curriculum on water
- * Consistency among agencies and local governments

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